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WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Vienna, 14-25 June 1993
Agenda items 9, 10, 11 and 12

GENERAL DEBATE ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS
SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
AND ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF OBSTACLES TO FURTHER PROGRESS IN
THIS AREA AND WAYS IN WHICH THEY CAN BE OVERCOME

CONSIDERATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT, DEMOCRACY
AND THE UNIVERSAL ENJOYMENT OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS, KEEPING IN VIEW
THE INTERRELATIONSHIP AND INDIVISIBILITY OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL,
CULTURAL, CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

CONSIDERATION OF CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN AND NEW CHALLENGES TO THE
FULL REALIZATION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND MEN, INCLUDING
THOSE OF PERSONS BELONGING TO VULNERABLE GROUPS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR: (a) STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN
THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONFORMITY WITH THE CHARTER OF THE
UNITED NATIONS AND WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS;
(b) ENSURING THE UNIVERSALITY, OBJECTIVITY AND NON-SELECTIVITY OF
THE CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES; (c) ENHANCING THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES AND MECHANISMS;
(d) SECURING THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR
UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Note by the President

Appeal by Nobel Peace Prize Laureates

The President wishes to inform the world Conference that he has received a communication from the delegation of Austria which reads as follows:

"It will be recalled that the Government of Austria had issued an invitation to all Nobel Peace Prize Laureates to gather in Vienna on the occasion of the opening of the World Conference on Human Rights.

The following Laureates accepted the Austrian invitation and accordingly participated in the Vienna gathering.

Individual personalities: Dr. Norman E. Borlaug (award 1970); Mrs. Betty Williams (1976); Mr. Adolfo Perez Esquivel (1980); Mr. Tenzin Gyatso, The Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet (1989); Mrs. Rigoberta Menchú Tum (1992).

Institutions and organizations: the Institute for International Law (1904) represented by Mr. Christian Dominicé; the International Committee of the Red Cross (1917, 1944, 1963) represented by Mr. Dietrich Schindler; the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) (1947) represented by Mrs. Brenda Bailey; the American Friends Service Committee (1947) represented by Mr. Stephen Cary; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1954, 1981) represented by Mrs. Sadako Ogata; the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (1963) represented by Mr. George Weber; the United Nations Children's Fund (1965) represented by Mr. Samir Sanad Basta; the International Labour Office (1969) represented by Mr. Heribert Maier; Amnesty International (1977) represented by Mr. Pierre Sané; the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (1985) represented by Co-President Dr. Mikhael Kuzin.

The decision to invite the Laureates to Vienna was prompted by the evident link between the observance of human rights and the maintenance of peace. It was felt that the Laureates should be given the opportunity to hold an in-depth discussion on the relationship between human rights and peace. Accordingly, appropriate private meetings were organized. In addition, a public round table on this topic, in which all Laureates attending participated, took place on 15 June.

In the course of their private meetings the Laureates drafted a special message which they are addressing to the World Conference on Human Rights. This message was publicly presented at a press conference held on 16 June. The text of the message, which contains important reflections on the realization of human rights worldwide, is reproduced in annex I.

Furthermore, the President of the Polish Republic, H.E. Mr. Lech Walesa, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1983, who was not in a position to come to the gathering of Laureates in Vienna, sent a special message of his own to the World Conference. The text of this message is reproduced in annex II.

The delegation of Austria would appreciate if this communication, together with its annexes, were circulated as a document of the World Conference and included in its report."

Annex I

MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
BY THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATES ASSEMBLED
IN VIENNA FROM 14 TO 16 JUNE 1993

We,

Laureates of the Nobel Peace Prize having gathered in Vienna, from 14 to 16 June 1993, at the invitation of the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria,

Considering the important objectives of the World Conference on Human Rights,

Bearing in mind the inherent interrelationship between the maintenance of peace and the observance of human rights,

Address the following message to the World Conference.

1. One of the fundamental lessons of our times is that respect for human rights is the key to peace. There can be no real peace without justice, and lasting peace must be founded upon a universal commitment to human kinship. National interests must be subject to international obligations.
2. In all cases where peace is broken and armed conflict occurs, it is essential that, as a mere minimum, the norms of international humanitarian law be respected by all parties to the conflict. Also, the community of nations must continue its progress towards complete disarmament.
3. The world is still witnessing mass violations of human rights which in themselves are a threat to peace: torture, political killings and summary executions, arbitrary detention, disappearances, all these are phenomena which can no longer be tolerated. There is an international responsibility to ensure that those who commit such crimes are brought to justice.
4. The death penalty constitutes a cruel and inhuman punishment and should be abolished throughout the world. Once abolished by a State it should never be reintroduced.
5. As a result of human rights violations and armed conflict the number of refugees and displaced persons is acquiring unprecedented dimensions. Human solidarity is imperative to ensure their protection and assistance. At the same time there is a need to address the root causes of such movements of people and a need for action to facilitate their return and their social reintegration under dignified conditions and to ensure their security.
6. The only way to permanently resolve the conflicts which are still racking the world is to address the main causes of human rights violations. Ethnic conflicts, the rise of militarism, racial, religious, cultural and ideological antagonism and the denial of social justice will be overcome if all people are

raised, educated and nurtured in the spirit of tolerance based on the respect for human rights, as manifested in the various human rights instruments adopted by the United Nations system.

7. Human rights include economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights. Those rights are indivisible and interrelated. They are universal in character. Genuine peace cannot be achieved without due observance of all those rights including the right to food, employment, health, education and a safe environment.

8. The right to food is of primordial importance. Governments must make the production and distribution of food their primary concern. Without adequate production of food and equitable distribution any human rights system will collapse.

9. Also, peace, fragile as it is, must be based on social justice, adequate economic progress and the right to self-determination. It is, therefore, the duty of the Governments of all nations to create international and national conditions in which the inherent dignity and worth of the human person are truly respected and the individual human being is given the possibility to develop his or her potential to the fullest with special attention paid to women, children and also disabled persons whose rights have been traditionally undervalued. Political systems based on genuine democratic participation by all are best able to ensure that aim. In that context the legitimate rights of indigenous peoples must be fully respected.

10. As we enter the twenty-first century it is time to give a new impetus to the vision enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations for a world of peace and justice. Such a world must be based on observance of human rights and the achievement of economic and social progress. In this context the important role which non-governmental organizations have to play in that regard must be recognized and supported.

Annex II

MESSAGE DATED 14 JUNE 1993 ADDRESSED TO THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON
HUMAN RIGHTS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE POLISH REPUBLIC,
MR. LECH WALESZA, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE 1983

I wish to express my gratitude for the invitation extended to me as a laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize to participate in the World Conference on Human Rights. I am not able to come to Vienna in person. I wish to assure you, however, that my heart and thoughts are with you.

The idea of the Conference is particularly close to me. During years of struggle with systemic totalitarianism I learned the respect for values basic in the life of every human being and every nation. My road to freedom is the road of peace. Solidarnosc - a social movement, under my leadership, achieved victory, without bloodshed. It started in a peaceful manner great changes in Europe. Today Poland is free.

Others have drawn their conclusions from our experience. Nevertheless, we should keep reminding ourselves of this, especially in times when some politicians tend to believe in the power of guns rather than peaceful negotiations. The tragedy of Yugoslavia exemplifies the terrible consequences of such thinking. We, the laureates of the Nobel Peace Prize, have a moral right and obligation to speak about this loudly. To remind and to warn. To appeal to world opinion. To thrill people's conscience.

Human rights cannot be an empty word, a promise without delivery. After all, respect for human rights constitutes the very basis of democracy. I am convinced that only through dialogue can one solve the difficult problems of the contemporary world.

At present, all citizens of free Poland enjoy equal rights. Nobody is discriminated against. These principles are reflected in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which upon my initiative is being prepared. This draft constitutional law is based on the principles of respect of the independence and dignity of every human being. The Charter sets the limits of the will of the majority in a society of free people.

As President of a State which follows the road of peace I am obliged to build a future free from violence, prejudice and hatred. This is a challenge we are bound to accept before both history and the present.

I am convinced that the Conference will give hope to those nations where human rights are violated, where human dignity is being trampled.

(Signed:) Lech Walesa
